

Meeting Record

DRCC Public Advisory Council & EPI Work Group

Wednesday, April 18th 2017 – 4:30-6:30pm
Windsor Airport Conference Room, Windsor, ON

Welcome, introductions, approval of agenda

Tom H called the meeting at 4:32pm with round table introductions while Gord H and Pearl B approved the agenda. The meeting attendance can be found in Appendix A of this meeting record.

Review of January 18, 2017 Meeting Record and Action Items

All action items were completed from the January 18th, 2017 meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Gina to share all upcoming conferences regarding Great Lakes and AOCs with Alison Turner. Done.

ACTION ITEM: Claire to request prices from both Cineplex and Lakeshore Cinemas and determine date for film screening. Done.

ACTION ITEM: Claire and Gina to communicate with the EPI and PAC about film screening event details once finalized. Done.

DRCC Update since January 2017

Claire and Gina provided an update on DRCC/RAP initiatives since January 2017. A Habitat Work Group meeting took place in March. Upcoming are the Monitoring and Research Work Group in late April as well as the Steering and Implementation Committee in June.

This spring/summer 2017, DRCC partners will undertake monitoring for the Bird and Animal Deformities and Reproductive Problems beneficial use impairment by monitoring Tree Swallows. There are four sites along the Detroit River where nest boxes are installed. Coastal wetlands along the river will be monitored again for water quality, vegetation, marsh birds and invertebrates to inform the Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations and Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat beneficial use impairments. The Canadian Wildlife Service has installed automatic recording units in coastal wetlands to record frog calls to help inform frog populations over the 2017 season. Research is also being done to track mercury sources and contaminants in fish within the Detroit River contributing to the Fish and Wildlife Consumption beneficial use impairment.

The DRCC will reveal the Restrictions on Dredging Activities re-designation report and soliciting public comments to the PAC, EPI and to the public this spring. In the near future, the Degradation of Benthos and Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations Beneficial Use Impairments re-designation reports will be presented soon to DRCC work groups who have worked on the research and monitoring. This June, the SIC meeting will result in the new pathway to delisting document, with all outstanding items left for the RAP.

Restrictions on Dredging Re-designation Report presentation

Claire presented the Dredging Re-designation report/process presentation with a reminder of the RAP/Re-designation progress refresher for the group. This presentation is Appendix B in this meeting record. Open water dredging disposal is impaired in the Canadian Detroit River because of the option for disposal of the dredging material due to Canadian material exceeding sediment quality guidelines. Within the 2014 GLWQA and the 2014 Canada-Ontario agreement, there is a process each RAP office must follow when approaching re-designation. In this case, the Monitoring and Research team helped to review all of the information included in the re-designation report. At this point, the report will be available to the public to solicit comments. Claire will distribute the report within the next couple of days with the EPI and PAC group.

Key Discussion Points

Councillor Hilary Payne asked the question about the overall RAP for the Detroit River, and what status all of the beneficial use impairments are in, and what timelines the DRCC is looking at for completing all actions. Claire responded by explaining that the easier to tackle BUIs are restored. The more challenging issues such as populations, habitat and fish consumption are what the DRCC is facing next. In addition, the American RAP for the Detroit River is also going to be a consideration for looking at all of these issues and discussion points with the rest of the group. Claire stressed having this critical eye when there is an opportunity for the groups to provide comments when there is an opportunity is available. Hilary Payne also asked why dredging in the Detroit River takes place. The reason is to refresh the shipping lanes, and the CCG has dredged the river every 3-4 years since the 1930's.

Derek Coronado brought up the concern of removing contaminated sediment on the Canadian side to dispose in an American facility and pursue re-designation in only one country. Open water disposal is being discouraged and Derek raised another concern regarding nutrients within the sediment. He asked what the issue would be with putting this in open waters, i.e. Lake Erie. It is the hope of the DRCC to help connect DFO/CCG and other organizations to look at options for the Detroit River and avoid open water disposal.

Elaine Price asked about whether the DR's high waters affects dredging, but this did not seem to be a concern of the rest of the group.

Pearl also mentioned that while dredging, contaminants are being pulled up within the water column. She asked whether samples are taken before and after dredging to determine whether there is a direct difference of before and after dredging takes place. This is something to look into as the DRCC did not know the answer at the time of the meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Claire will circulate the draft Restriction on Dredging Re-Designation Report to the EPI and PAC for review and comment. As well, she will set up a page on the DRCC website with all relevant information and share through all communication networks.

PAC Update since January, 2017

Tom Henderson, the PAC Chair provided updates to the group regarding US budget cuts to the EPA/GLRI funding and Ojibway Shores. Derek Coronado shared an update regarding the Bruce Nuclear Waste Disposal project through Ontario Power Generation (OPG) with the group.

US budget cuts to EPA/GLRI

When President Trump announced the draft budget for his new administration, the EPA cuts were significant, with a large cut to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. The proposal was to reduce the budget from \$300 million to \$10 million. Since the original proposal, the number has been adjusted to only a 30% cut. The budget is still waiting approval, with many Great Lakes states in opposition of the cuts. Tom Henderson sent a letter to Scott Pruitt, who is the incoming Administrator to the EPA with copies to Prime Minister Trudeau, Gary Peters and Debbie Stabenow who are both United States Senators. This letter is included as Appendix C in the meeting record.

Hilary Payne provided a positive thought by saying that the administration so far has shown wandering commitments, and the group while being concerned, should wait until the final budget is prepared.

Ojibway Shores

Tom H. provided a brief update to the group, and confirmed that no action has yet to take place regarding the fate of the Ojibway Shores property. Derek C. also mentioned that the groups who are competing for the contract to develop the WDBA project, they have to produce an overall community benefit component. He suggested that Ojibway Shores might be included as a community benefit component.

Bruce Nuclear Waste Disposal

In 2015, the Joint Review Panel of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) recommended proceeding with the OPG project proposal to have a disposal facility at their Bruce site for all of Ontario with the exception of spent nuclear fuel. The proposal suggested burying it 600+m underground and 1km away from the facility. In 2016, there were many questions from the new Environment and Climate Change Minister. She wanted the OPG to provide more information, and solicit public comments on the OPG response to the Minister's questions. The CEAA and the greater public considered the comments provided by OPG to not be in detail enough. As a result, there are 23 key issues that must be addressed by the OPG.

Patricia McGormann raised a concern for how credible a 1km deep burial site is to stand up to safety and security reasons. Steve also mentioned a project that he is working on concerning an endangered species on their property. Since the animal is present, they will be blocked on developing the facility.

EPI Project Update since January 2017

Twin Oaks clean up, Earth Day, Tranby Park (I. Naisbitt)

Ian provided an update to the group on the recent Little River cleanup with Caesars CodeGreen, the City of Windsor, Lil' Reg and the DRCC. There were over 50 volunteers who collected 8 tonnes of debris from the area, and the event was covered by CTV Windsor, CBC and the Windsor Star.

Pete Thomas suggested developing a program of prevention in Windsor to raise the issues to City Council. This can include raising the fines for illegal dumping and rewarding those who put in the tip. Another suggestion would be to put a city owned dumpster at the barriers along Munich Court. A

camera would also help to catch some of the larger dumps taking place and maybe even catch some of the businesses bringing their material to the site.

ACTION ITEM: Claire and Tom to draft a report for Hilary Payne to present to City Council regarding concern for illegal dumping in Windsor, using the Twin Oaks site cleanup as evidence. The report can outline the issue and include a list of suggestions that the council can review to help support a decision.

Ian Naisbitt, the EPI Chair invited the PAC and EPI to participate in the DRCC/ERCA Earth Day event along the Little River. There will be 2,205 trees to plant, and the event is expected to host over 1,000 people. He also invited the group to participate in planting 200 trees at Tranby Park on May 6th 2017.

Update on outreach 2016/17 EPI Projects

Gina provided a brief update to the group regarding some of the new EPI projects that are being developed. The Asset Map is underway, and the DRCC is waiting to determine the software logistics with ERCA and will start to plug information into the Detroit River map. At the Friends of Detroit River's Shiver on the River event, there was a 3D printed model of a section of the Detroit River on the Michigan Sea Grant table that engineering students created from UMichigan. The DRCC has reached out to the team, and is waiting to hear pricing and timelines to potentially have one created. Ian N. suggested including Peche Island in the 3D model, and Pearl B. suggested asking UWindsor if they are able to also provide a model to compare pricing. Last, the Ojibway Nature Centre is pulling together all of the pieces for their new displays. The Detroit River section will be assembled over the next couple of months.

New projects for 2017/18

Gina provided a reminder to the PAC and EPI on the DRCC Communications Plan while making connections to some of the projects that are on the go, such as the benthos re-designation process and some upcoming events. Claire also presented the 2017/18 proposed DRCC budget to the Work Group. This presentation is included in Appendix D of this meeting record.

Some new items for the 2017/18 year include developing a 5 minute video with drone footage highlighting Detroit River projects. As well, Family Fishing Day will be hosted by the DRCC along with additional partners such as the Windsor Sportsmen's Club and the City of Windsor on July 8th 2017.

Key Discussion Points

Patricia M. suggested creating a video that highlights biodiversity within a tributary, to show the impacts/issues and what life is living there that needs protection. The messaging here can include stewardship and how the three sub-watersheds can impact the Detroit River.

Elaine Price suggested getting in touch with the film studies contact with the school board to find out whether there is an option there. Pearl's nephew also is working professional with the University of Windsor on film projects.

The EPI was also interested in hearing about whether Peche Island Day will take place this year. The DRCC would like to pursue this event, but is still having trouble finding boats to help assist.

Ian N. also suggested installing interpretive signs at the Twin Oaks site and others in sub-watersheds. Claire mentioned the double sided sign is about \$1,000 with help from the City of Windsor to install

them. Andy Paul mentioned that through previous conversations, locations have been identified in LaSalle.

ACTION ITEM: Andy Paul to follow up with Claire and share information about potential interpretive sign locations in LaSalle. Done.

ACTION ITEM: Claire to talk to Kate Arthur (ERCA) to determine if the trees previously planted at Windsor Airport are still there.

Next Meeting and Meeting Adjournment

Tom Henderson wrapped up the meeting and mentioned that since the Detroit River Evening is in June 2016, the PAC and EPI will likely not meet until after that time.

Upcoming Detroit River and Community Events

- Recycling Day at Devonshire Mall – April 22
- Earth Day – April 23, Malden Park and Little River site
- DRCC Steering and Implementation Committee Meeting teleconference – April 26
- Caesar’s Windsor CodeGreen display – April 29
- Forest Ontario Planting – Tranby Park, May 6
- Eau Canada 150 – Canoeing events in 4 DR locations, Sunday June 4
- Detroit River Evening – Location TBD, Wednesday June 21
- Detroit River Family Fishing Day – Location TBD, tentatively July 8

Appendix A. – Attendance

Tom Henderson	PAC Chair
Ian Naisbitt	Little River Enhancement Group, PAC/EPI Chair
Gord Harding	PAC Co-Chair
Pete Thomas	Canadian Auto Workers (PAC/EPI)
Pearl Bradd	PAC/EPI
Councillor Hilary Payne	City of Windsor
Derek Coronado	Citizens Environmental Alliance (EPI/PAC)
Steve Marks	Essex County Field Naturalists’ Club (EPI/PAC)
Naresh Manku	PAC/EPI
Patricia McGormann	PAC/EPI
Andy Paling	Essex County Field Naturalists’ Club, Friends of Canard River, (EPI/PAC)
Daniel St. Dennis	Caesars Windsor, PAC/EPI
Elaine Price	PAC/EPI
Claire Sanders	DRCC
Gina Pannunzio	DRCC

Gina Pannunzio prepared this meeting record.